

MINUTES
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF YORK

Adjourned Meeting
March 8, 2005

6:00 p.m.

Meeting Convened. An Adjourned Meeting of the York County Board of Supervisors was called to order at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 8, 2005, in the East Room, York Hall, by Chairman James S. Burgett.

Attendance. The following members of the Board of Supervisors were present: Walter C. Zarembo, Sheila S. Noll, Kenneth L. Bowman, James S. Burgett, and Thomas G. Shepperd, Jr.

Also in attendance were James O. McReynolds, County Administrator; and James E. Barnett, County Attorney.

WORK SESSION

PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2006 BUDGET

Mr. McReynolds started the meeting with a brief overview of the proposed budget, and stated the staff would then provide information based on questions the Board of Supervisors had at the last meeting. He also clarified a mistake in the Daily Press article that stated the total FY06 budget was \$216 million. He stated that because of accounting and reporting changes, the interfund transfers are shown differently in the budget.

Mr. Shepperd thanked Mr. McReynolds for the clarification, stating the report that said the budget had increased by \$30 million was ridiculous, and he had received several phone calls.

Mr. Zarembo asked if the new format now includes Capital Improvements Program as well as the General Fund.

Mr. McReynolds indicated the bottom line does.

Discussion followed on interfund transfers.

Mrs. Marycarol White, Director of Financial and Management Services, reviewed information on service indicators over the past 10 years in terms of numbers as well as percentages of change as requested by the Board. She then indicated the Board had asked for time to look at the handouts staff provided last week, and stated staff was prepared to answer any questions the Board might have concerning the information.

Chairman Burgett stated he thought the nominal property tax rate was very interesting. He stated it illustrates the difference between the assessments and the market value, which showed that County had a true effective tax rate of \$.79 per \$100. He stated he felt the County would be looking at an even lower number next year.

Mr. Zarembo asked how the true market value was determined.

Mr. McReynolds explained that the state does a study of the sales that occur in the County to the assessed value.

Discussion followed concerning the true tax rate.

Chairman Burgett then noted he would like for staff to review the slides prepared for this work session.

Mrs. White reviewed the General Fund proposed contributions and the proposed tourism fund contributions for FY2006.

Mr. Zaremba indicated he wished to discuss the shortfall for Colonial Community Corrections, and he asked Mrs. Anne Smith, Director of Community Services, to provide some information.

Mrs. Smith stated the budget request was two-fold. One part was for the planner position, and the other part was for a contribution for alternatives to adult incarceration. The local share and increase was requested because of a loss of state funding. She noted the organization provides alternatives to jail-based services for adult offenders.

Mr. Zaremba provided the Board members with a handout, and he stated that this year all the counties submitted a request to the General Assembly for it to meet funding requirements for community corrections in an amount of over \$3 million. When all was done, the General Assembly has provided only \$500,000 for the 96 counties. Like most unfunded mandates, he stated the burden comes down to the local jurisdiction. Instead of getting \$50,000, Mr. Zaremba stated the County will wind up getting about \$12,000. If alternative sentencing can be provided by the probation system, it costs \$4.52 per day versus the cost of being in jail. If funding does not materialize for these alternatives, those people will be incarcerated, driving the costs up. Mr. Zaremba stated that James City County has indicated it would provide its share.

Mrs. Noll stated the Corrections Board came to the Board of Supervisors for the Planner position originally, indicating there was a grant for the position. She asked if the Corrections Board has stopped pursuing grants, and expects the County to absorb the cost. Mrs. Noll stated her problem with grants was that once an employee was hired through a grant, all efforts stop for pursuing other grant funding.

Mr. Zaremba stated the grants are usually to get the program going, and the localities pick up the tab for the future.

Discussion followed on the duties and responsibilities of the Planner position.

Mr. Zaremba stated the bottom line is that the County has again been dumped on by the General Assembly, and if the Board does not step up to the plate in this case, the cost to the County and to neighboring jurisdictions as well in the long run will be much more than the \$18,000+ being requested. Mr. Zaremba stated he felt the Board needed to support this effort.

Mrs. White clarified that the proposal contained in the proposed budget is to continue to fund the County's share of the Planner position, but it did not propose to fund the unfunded mandate caused by the State's reduction.

Chairman Burgett agreed that this item should be funded, but that the Board should review all questions before making final funding decisions. He indicated the next item he was concerned about was the Williamsburg Library contribution. He stated it is a lot of money, and he could see where the County could take that \$100,000 and get a storefront to start a County branch in the upper County and run it for less than the requested funding. He stated York County does not charge others who use the York County libraries, and the Board should examine the possibility of establishing an upper County branch. Mr. Burgett stated he felt that Williamsburg would still allow York County residents to use its facilities.

Mr. Zaremba stated he felt Mr. Burgett's statement was an affront to the citizens of the upper county. He stated the County entered into an agreement with the Williamsburg Library that was based on the per capita expense York County spends for its citizens in the lower county, and the Board has an obligation to serve these people in an equitable manner. He stated suggesting that a storefront would meet the requirements of the upper county residents was untenable.

Discussion followed on the feasibility of an upper county library branch, as well as the possibility of using the Bruton High School library as a branch County library.

Mr. Shepperd suggested that Mr. Zaremba be charged with determining where a library was needed in the upper county. He stated he was interested in providing the service up there, but

there was a trade-off. He stated he felt that eventually the upper County would have a library branch.

Mr. Shepperd indicated he would advocate increasing the contribution to the Hospice of Williamsburg.

Mrs. White noted that since the General Assembly had passed the budget with a cost of living increase for employees of Constitutional Officers, the County might have an extra \$60,000 in state revenue.

Chairman Burgett stated if there was going to be another \$60,000 in revenue, the Board could certainly fund the Hospice request and add to Colonial Corrections.

Mrs. Noll suggested giving the Historical Committee the \$24,000 it requested.

Mrs. White then reviewed the requests for Tourism Funds.

Discussion followed on requests of the Williamsburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Fife and Drums of York Town, the Watermen's Museum, and the Customs House. A brief discussion followed concerning a future YMCA facility being built in the upper County.

Meeting Recessed. At 7:31 p.m. Chairman Burgett declared a short recess.

Meeting Reconvened. At 7:40 p.m. the meeting was reconvened in open session by order of the Chair.

Mrs. White then reviewed a recap of information previously provided on personnel and compensation.

Mrs. Noll indicated the Department of Environmental and Development Services might need more help.

Discussion followed concerning the proposed position for Environmental and Development Services, as well as the Risk Manager position for Financial and Management Services. Discussion also took place concerning the school division and the increased employee compensation for its positions.

Mr. Shepperd raised the issue of taxation on boats, stating it was not his suggestion to eliminate the tax but to look at it in terms of fairness in relation to the surrounding communities. He noted that last year the Board dealt with the tax rate on property, so he wanted to ask the Board to reconsider this issue at this time. He stated his idea was that if the County brought its tax rate down on boats, it might be able to increase the revenue because people would be more inclined to bring their boats back into the County.

Mrs. Noll stated this was a small group of people. It was a luxury and a choice that was made by those who own them.

Mr. Zaremba stated the Board members have just been looking for extra money, and now there was talk about lowering a tax rate that would cause a shortfall where the Board has just spent a lot of time adding money to fund the things it needed to fund. He indicated if the Board decides to reduce this tax, it would have to look at where it will make up the reduced revenue.

Chairman Burgett noted the advantage of this particular proposed tax decrease would be only to 238 people.

Mr. Zaremba indicated that without knowing how many boats are parked in other localities, the information does not mean much.

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Mr. Shepperd suggested it might be appropriate to think about this issue another time or reduce the rate on a gradual basis.

Chairman Burgett stated it would be a good idea to get information from county marina owners as to what they think.

Mr. McReynolds summarized the Board's wishes concerning the property tax on boats, stating the Board would like for staff over the next year to gather information on the number of slips available in the County and the number of boats registered outside the County.

Chairman Burgett stated the Board also wished information as to whether a reduction in the tax rate would increase the County's revenue or if it would be revenue neutral.

The Board then reviewed several areas of the proposed budget that had changed over the last year, to include the undesignated fund balance, Public Service Corporations, the 911 surcharge, fines and forfeitures, library fines, disaster relief fund, the lodging tax, the PAED contribution, and the Sheriff's Department bike patrol.

Meeting Adjourned. At 8:30 p.m. Chairman Burgett declared the meeting be adjourned to 8:00 a.m., Saturday, March 12, 2005, in the Conference Room of the Marriott Courtyard Hotel, for the purpose of conducting a retreat.

James O. McReynolds, Clerk
York County Board of Supervisors

James S. Burgett, Chairman
York County Board of Supervisors